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Letter dated 6 February 2002 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 4 February 2002, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

02-24786 (E) 110202

Annex

Letter dated 4 February 2002 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on the operations of the Stabilization Force (see enclosure). I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) George **Robertson**

Enclosure

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. Over the reporting period (1-31 December 2001) there were almost 18,000 troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia with contributions from all the NATO allies and from 15 non-NATO countries.

2. During the period under review, the overall situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remained relatively stable, although there was an increase in inter-ethnic tension between Bosnian Croats and Bosniacs in Stolac near the site where the rebuilding of a mosque is under way.

3. The Stabilization Force (SFOR) continues to contribute towards the maintenance of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, monitor compliance by the Entity Armed Forces, conduct inspections and consolidation of weapons storage sites, provide support to the international organizations working in theatre, and provide support to the Federation authorities in collecting weapons and ammunition in the framework of Operation Harvest.

4. On 14 and 15 December, SFOR supported the Federation authorities in an operation to search the premises of a non-governmental organization, the Global Relief Foundation (GRF), in Sarajevo, Visoko, Kakanj and Travnik. The operation, which was part of an SFOR campaign against international terrorism, was carried out under the direction of Allied Forces, Southern Europe, and in coordination with a search of the Foundation's premises in Kosovo. The search in Bosnia and Herzegovina resulted in the arrest of seven people who are being held by the Bosnian authorities.

5. On 21 December, in the latest development in a criminal investigation of weapons smuggling rings in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a Bosnian Brigadier General was arrested for suspected weapons smuggling. The Commander of the Federation Army Joint Command has acknowledged that members of the Federation Army have been involved in arms smuggling.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

6. The situation in theatre remained relatively calm throughout the reporting period, with the entities in substantial compliance with the military provisions of the Peace Agreement. There were no restrictions on the freedom of movement of either SFOR troops or the civilian population, and there were no attacks directed against SFOR.

7. During the period under review, SFOR troops conducted 70 weapons storage site inspections: 28 Bosnian Serb; 16 Bosniac; 16 Bosnian Croat; and 10 Federation. During routine inspection on 3 December, SFOR found several seals broken in a weapons storage site near Tomislavgrad. Five thousand rounds of 7.62 mm and 900 rounds of 5.56 mm ammunition were missing. On 16 December, SFOR seized approximately seven tons of weapons and ammunition from 12 illegal weapons

storage sites in the Prijedor area. In another search operation, carried out on 17 December in the same area, local police discovered 18,000 rounds of ammunition as well as grenades and other munitions.

8. SFOR troops monitored 199 training and movement activities during the reporting period: 105 Bosnian Serb; 43 Bosniac; 13 Bosnian Croat; and 38 Federation.

9. Over the period, six mine-clearing activities were monitored: 4 Bosniac and 2 Bosnian Croat.

Cooperation with international organizations

10. Within capabilities and in accordance with its mandate, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in theatre, including the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the International Police Task Force (IPTF), the Office of the High Representative, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

11. On 3 and 4 December, and again on 22 December, SFOR supported local police during an inter-ethnic dispute between local Bosniacs and Bosnian Croats at the site where the mosque in Stolac is being rebuilt.

12. To help implement the decision taken by the High Representative to disburse 5,000 convertible marks to each of the estimated 35,000 small depositors of the Hercegovacka Banka throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, SFOR provided security support to the Office of the High Representative in carrying out this task during the period from 7 to 29 December.[1]

13. SFOR is providing facilities and Multinational Specialized Unit instructors in support of the IPTF initiative to train Federation local police in countering civil disturbances. The first phase of the training will take place in January 2002, and the second between March and October.

14. On 28 December, the management of the intermediate airspace, between 10,000 and 29,000 feet, over Bosnia and Herzegovina was transferred to Croatia Control Limited, which operates on behalf of the Bosnian authorities. The lower portion, below 10,000 feet, continues to be controlled by SFOR. At the request of the Bosnian Department of Civil Aviation, SFOR will continue to provide search and rescue coverage until the end of 2002.

Displaced persons and refugees

15. SFOR support to UNHCR in creating a safe and secure environment during 2001 contributed to the return of a significant number of displaced persons and refugees to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Of a total of 1.8 million people displaced in the war, about 15 per cent (810,000 persons) have returned to their pre-war homes. Of the remaining 990,000 persons, about half are still internally displaced within the country.

Outlook

16. Although the overall security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remained stable during the reporting period, the effects of a poor economy, organized crime and corruption, inter-ethnic tension and disruptive local groups continue to pose all together a risk to stability

Notes

[1] The High Representative decided to establish the provisional administration of the Hercegovacka Banka on 5 April 2001 following the concerns expressed by the Peace Implementation Council on the corruption hindering the economic reform of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and on the lack of transparency in the ownership of the bank.